

students. They are responsible for assisting teachers in a variety of ways to implement the instructional program. They work directly with children in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, and through this close interaction, they foster strong bonds that motivate pupils to develop the knowledge needed to provide a solid educational foundation.

Mrs. McKinnie and her husband, Albert, have three sons and one daughter, and her time outside the classroom is spent enjoying quality time with her family. She is currently enrolled at Chipola College, where she is pursuing a degree in Exceptional Student Education.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Tiffany McKinnie for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence at Roulhac Middle School. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. McKinnie, and we wish her all the best.

FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from New York, the Honorable CAROLYN MCCARTHY, to provide needed funding for the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS. The intent of the amendment is for the Department of Justice to use \$20 million appropriated in the State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account to provide grants to States and tribal areas to implement the NICS Improvement Amendments Act, Public Law 110–180.

Representative MCCARTHY and I have worked together to improve the national instant check system since 2002. It was obvious to us at the time that the National Instant Check System was not working as Congress had intended it should. However, it was the tragedy of Virginia Tech that spurred Congress to act unanimously to update the instant check system. The perpetrator of that violent attack was adjudicated a danger to himself and others—therefore, legally prohibited from possessing a firearm—but was able to pass a background check because his name was not in the NICS database.

It is estimated that there are still millions of qualifying records that should be in NICS but are not. A study by the National Center for State Courts found there should be roughly twice as many mental-health records in NICS as there currently are, based on responses from 42 of 56 States and territories.

At the time we enacted the NICS Improvement Amendments Act, we found that there were two primary reasons there were delays in NICS background checks: the lack of updated and available State criminal disposition

records and insufficient automated access to records pertaining to mental illness, restraining orders, and misdemeanor convictions for domestic violence.

The NICS Improvement Amendments Act sought to address these inadequacies by authorizing grants to States and tribal areas to upgrade their electronic records and technologies, enhance their capacities to perform background checks, supply accurate and timely criminal history disposition records, and improve reporting and transmitting to the NICS database. This amendment would allow the Department of Justice to continue making these grants. Adequate funding for NICS must be part of the equation to improve it. Between FY 09 and FY 11, the NICS Improvement Amendments Act authorizes appropriations of over \$900 million. Yet, in FY 09 and FY 10, just \$30 million has been appropriated.

Mr. Chair, all Members of Congress can agree that we must confront our budget and deficit. However, at a time when States' budgets are more strained than ever, the federal government must be ready to help protect public safety, enforce the laws on the books, and in turn, serve our national interest.

Funding for NICS is not only an important tool to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and those mentally unfit to possess them, but also to ensure individuals' Second Amendment rights are protected, as States are required to remove obsolete or erroneous records from the database. This common-sense amendment is supported by the National Rifle Association, an organization whose top priority is protecting the Second Amendment rights of Americans. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

HONORING MINNIE B. YOUNG

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Minnie B. Young. Mrs. Minnie B. Young was born on March 11, 1937, outside of Leland, Mississippi. She is the youngest of five children. Mrs. Young was married twice; both husbands are deceased. Mrs. Young is the proud mother of five children.

Mrs. Young attended elementary school in Dunleith, MS, then on to Abraham Lincoln Attendance Center in Leland, MS.

In 1965, Mrs. Young and others went on a strike for a pay increase from A.L. Andrew Plantation, located in what was then Tent City, MS. It was called Tent City because they lived in tents. However, there were no raises and the strikers eventually quit their jobs at the Plantation. The strikers then changed the name of the town from Tent City to what we now know as Strike City in 1966. Also, she was one of the marchers in Greenville, MS, during the Civil Rights Era in 1966.

Mrs. Young worked in the Head Start program from 1966–1980. She went from Head Start to Witte Memorial Hospital, in Leland, MS, from 1980–1985.

Mrs. Young enjoys writing poems. She considers this a hobby, which she has been doing since she was a little girl. Both she and her daughter, Maxine Johnson, call themselves

“Strike City’s Finest Poets.” They published a book of poems called Real Talk. Mrs. Young considers herself a religious poet. Today, she still writes poems, mostly for her church, Greater St. Matthew M.B. Church, located in Strike City, MS.

HONORING THE CHELSEA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSI- NESS LEADERSHIP AWARD WIN- NERS

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor The Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, 2010 Business Leadership Award winners. The Large Business Award winner is Cleary’s Pub and the Small Business Award winner is True North Jerky Co. These annual awards are presented by the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce and the Ambassador Club of the Chamber.

The formal presentation of each award will be during the February 17, 2011, Annual Meeting for the Chelsea Chamber of Commerce. Each of these award winners was judged in several areas that include; displaying innovative ideas and services, demonstrated leadership in the Chelsea business community, support of the Chelsea Area Chamber of Commerce, and contributing to the economic impact of the City of Chelsea.

Cleary’s Pub is owned by Pat Cleary, Meg Boomer, and Joan Henry. This brother and sister team of owners has been in business for 20 years in their familiar Main Street location in downtown Chelsea.

True North Jerky Co. is owned by Phil and Jennifer Tolliver. Phil and Jennifer also are the franchisee for Bearclaw Coffee Drive-Thru located adjacent to the Jerky Co.

These local businesses in the 7th Congressional District have established themselves as true leaders and entrepreneurs who continue to spur economic growth even during these tough economic times.

I would like to commend and congratulate these businesses owners on their successful business ventures that have contributed greatly to the City of Chelsea, Michigan, and the 7th Congressional District.

HONORING JOHN DAVID MERCER FOR HIS HEROIC ACTION IN SAV- ING LIVES

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of the House the heroic efforts of a constituent of mine whose quick thinking saved lives during a recent pre-dawn Mobile, Alabama motel fire.

On the early morning of December 21, 2010, John David Mercer, a staff photographer with the Mobile Press-Register, was driving home after shooting the historic lunar eclipse when his eye caught sight of another target. While glancing over at the battleship USS Alabama, a local landmark, Mr. Mercer noticed